

Planning and Development

Montgomery County Planning Department

The Planning Board's Office of Community Outreach and Media Relations strives to inform the community about Montgomery County Park and Planning initiatives. Through the ongoing efforts of County Park and Planning staff and actions by the Planning Board, they are building great communities in Montgomery County. Here's how you can play a part.

Stay Informed on Development

Subscribe to [InfoShare](#), the weekly e-newsletter, which contains information on the Planning Board agenda, upcoming events in the Department of Parks and important notices from the Planning Department.

Want to Testify?

The Planning Board meets every Thursday at its [Silver Spring headquarters](#) and welcomes your input on items that come before them. Register to testify on an item up to 10 days in advance of a Planning Board hearing. [Sign up online](#) once the agenda is posted, call 301-495-4600 to put your name on the list or submit your name to the Planning Board clerk on the day of the hearing. Unable to testify in person? Send your thoughts to the Board at mcp-chairman@mncppc-mc.org. If you've never addressed the Board, learn more about testifying with the [resident's guide](#).

Department of Permitting Services

The mission of the Department of Permitting Services (DPS) is to provide the highest quality of public service while insuring compliance with Montgomery County development and construction standards. Simply put, anyone who wants to develop land or build something on it in the County has to obtain a permit from DPS to do so. DPS enforces standards that control what goes on before, during and after construction. Also, zoning matters, such as whether or not a business activity is being conducted in a residential area, whether or not someone has built something too close to a property line, or whether or not someone may sell flowers on a public street are regulated by DPS. Permitting Services does not get involved in disputes between business owners and their customers, between tenants and landlords, or between homeowners and their neighborhood associations.

Some of the specific services provided by DPS include the issuance of street-grading, storm-drain, sediment-control, well, septic, building, electrical and use-and-occupancy permits; the licensing of electricians and vendors; and the inspection of building, road-construction, and land-disturbance activities. DPS is a coordinating agency for approvals from other agencies (such as Fire and Rescue, WSSC, MNCPPC, State Highway Administration) for permits that we issue.

The DPS automated permit system makes it possible for customers to access permit information, schedule inspections, and accomplish a host of other permitting tasks via our [website](#). Also, customers can perform some of these functions by using the DPS “Interactive Voice Response” telephone system (240 777-6210).

Zoning Violations and Illegal Construction Activities

The Department of Permitting Services (DPS) maintains a phone line for citizens to request investigations of suspected zoning violations and illegal construction activities (building without permits). The phone number is (240) 777-6259.

When you contact DPS, please provide the following information:

- Your name, address and phone number (not required; anonymous complaints are accepted).
- The exact address and/or location of the property where you have observed a possible code violation.

You may also submit this information [online](#).

If you wish to have your name and personal information remain confidential, please clearly state this request during your telephone call to DHCA or in your written complaint.

Housing Code Enforcement

The mission of the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA), Code Enforcement Section, is to maintain and preserve the quality of life in Montgomery County in general and that of our neighborhoods and housing stock in particular. The Code Enforcement Section is responsible for administering Chapter 26, Housing and Building Maintenance Standards, Chapter 48, Solid Waste, and Chapter 58, Weeds, Montgomery County Code. These Codes define how properties are to be maintained in Montgomery County.

Consistent enforcement of the County Codes will help to:

- improve the quality of life for Montgomery County citizens;
- stabilize neighborhoods;
- provide safe, decent, and clean dwelling units;
- maintain and enhance property values; and

- prevent blight.

We accomplish these goals by investigating complaints, performing legally required inspections and educating our citizens regarding their rights and responsibilities in the area of property maintenance.

If you would like to report a complaint, please call the Housing Code Office (240) 777-3785 and provide the following information:

- Your name, address and phone number (not required; anonymous complaints are accepted),
- The address and/or location of the property where you have observed a possible code violation,
- The property owners' or occupants' names, if known. You may also submit this information in writing to: DHCA, Housing Code Enforcement, 100 Maryland Avenue, 2nd Floor, Rockville, Maryland 20850.

If you wish to have your name and personal information remain confidential, please clearly state this request during your telephone call to DHCA or in your written complaint.

What happens next?

You will receive notification identifying the Inspector assigned to investigate your complaint. This will allow you to follow the progress of the investigation. If violations are found, a Notice of Violation will be mailed to the property owner requiring compliance by a certain date. A Notice may also be posted on the site. The amount of time allowed for code compliance varies based upon the type of violation and the time necessary for making repairs or corrections. Generally, 30 days are allowed for the correction of non-emergency violations. Emergency violations must be corrected within 24 hours. The property will be re-inspected to determine whether violations have been corrected.

If violations remain uncorrected

If violations are not corrected, various civil and criminal penalties, including substantial fines, can be imposed. The County also has the right to clean up a property and charge the property owner for costs incurred. For additional information, visit the Housing Code Enforcement office [website](#).

What occurs after filing a complaint?

Complaints are assigned to Zoning/Building Investigators/Inspectors who, if they find violations, instruct the violators to take corrective action. If a violation is not corrected within a reasonable

time, various civil and criminal penalties, including substantial fines, can be imposed. The department keeps complainants' names confidential.

Will The Results Of An Investigation Be Available?

The Investigator will inform you of important developments in the case and its final outcome.

How Long Will the Investigation Take?

Normally, an investigation begins within one to three days from receipt of the complaint. Investigation time varies according to workload and/or complexity of the complaint. For additional information, visit the DPS [website](#).